



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 3, 2006

CONTACT:
MICHELLE MOWERY JOHNSON
(615) 313-4707 / OFFICE

LICENSES ON THE LINE FOR THOUSANDS OF TENNESSEANS *CHILD SUPPORT OFFICIALS CRACK DOWN ON NON-PAYING PARENTS*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— More than 15,000 parents who are not paying child support as ordered face losing their driver's, professional and/or recreational licenses if they don't pay up soon. Letters are going out this week from the Department of Human Services warning delinquent parents that if they owe at least \$500 in back child support and haven't made a payment in more than 90 days, they could lose their license(s).

The largest amount of overdue support for one parent is just under \$190,000 and is owed by a parent in Davidson County. Other top offenders owing more than \$100,000 come from Montgomery, Hamilton, Shelby and Tipton Counties. In all, the 15,000 parents owe a combined \$200 million in overdue child support. The parents come from all walks of life, including medical doctors, real estate agents and professional teachers.

"Thousands of children are suffering because of their parents' refusal to pay child support," said Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge. "The License Revocation program is a strong incentive and is a proven, effective tool for the collection of overdue support. The purpose of this program is not to punish parents, but to secure the court-ordered and much needed support for the children."

State and federal law allows DHS, which administers the Child Support Program, to revoke the licenses of parents who fail to pay their child support. The notices inform parents that they can prevent revocation if they contact their local child support office and set up payment plans, or repay the past due amount.

Most of the letters are being sent to parents in Shelby, Davidson, Hamilton and Knox Counties. More than 15,000 driver's licenses issued by the Department of Safety are at risk. There are over 1,000 hunting and fishing licenses on the line, and 450 professional licenses issued by the Departments of Commerce and Insurance, Health, and Education are in jeopardy.

In addition to the license revocation program, the Child Support division and its partners use enforcement tools such as administrative wage assignment, liens and passport denial to collect support.

Total child support collections for state fiscal year 2005-2006 were just under \$500 million. DHS handles more than 380,000 child support cases, and more than 245,000 of these are cases under order.

For more information on the Child Support Program, visit the DHS website at:
http://state.tn.us/humanserv/cs/cs_main.htm

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TN 37248
615.313.4700